

REMARKS

Claims 65, 73, and 76 have been amended to address the 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2 concerns raised by the Examiner. Applicants request that the 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2 rejection be withdrawn. Claim 76 also has been amended in the same manner to avoid the Examiner potentially raising the same concern with regard to electrode active material, binder, and solvent; applicants have also amended the dependent claims to reflect the changes to claim 76.

In the interests of more clarity, the ends of clauses (a) and (b) in claim 76 have been changed to specify that the first cathode layer includes no substrate. This is consistent with steps 34 and 36 of the method shown in Fig. 1 and discussed in paragraphs 0039 and 0040 in the specification. During step 36, the first cathode layer and the second cathode layer (the “green film[s]”) do not have substrates.

Applicants also note that although they have inserted “first” and “second” in front of cathode mixture, substrate, electrode active material, binder, and solvent in claim 76, they do not mean to imply that, for example, the “first cathode mixture” must have a different composition from the “second cathode mixture”. In addition, as step 35 in Fig. 1 and paragraph 0036 in the specification make clear, once the “first” substrate is removed from the first cathode mixture it can be reused. Conceivably, in view of optimal substrate reuse the second cathode mixture could be coated on a “second” substrate that previously had been used as the “first” substrate.

In addition, claim 57 has been amended to further clarify that the first cathode layer includes some solvent. This amendment is consistent with the “removing only a portion of the first solvent” language appearing earlier in the claim. The first cathode layer (including some of the solvent) is used in step (c). This embodiment provides the advantage discussed in paragraph 0036 of the specification:

After the cathode mixture is applied to the substrate, the layer is dried to remove some solvent (step 32). In some circumstances, it is desirable to have residual solvent in the cathode layer after this drying step (step 32). The maximum amount of residual solvent is preferably no greater than 1200 ppm. It is believed that the residual solvent provides the partially dried layer with enhanced physical properties, e.g., flexibility, which enhances the ability of the layer to be laminated and calendered during fabrication (described below).

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Filed : December 27, 2001
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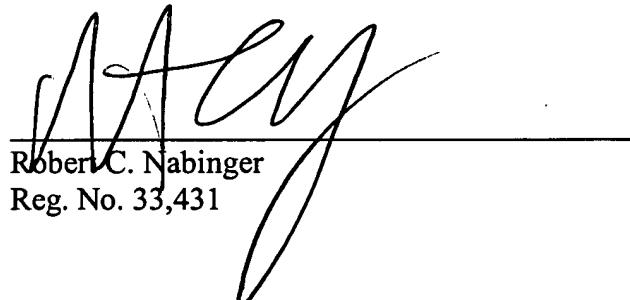
Applicants will focus on the rejections of claims 76 and 57 in this amendment. These claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Chu, U.S. Pat. 5,582,623 ("Chu"). Applicants discussed Chu in detail in prior amendments and will not repeat the discussion in full here. Chu does not disclose or suggest layering a first cathode layer that includes no substrate with a second cathode layer that includes no substrate. Chu states that two or more electrodes can be laminated to provide a thicker electrode, but Chu's electrodes include a current collector. Thus, Chu does not disclose or suggest step (c) in claim 76, and the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of all the pending claims should be withdrawn for these reasons.

Chu also does not disclose or suggest making a cathode layer that still includes some solvent, and then laminating that cathode layer to another cathode layer, as required by claim 57. Thus, the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection of claim 57 should be withdrawn for this additional reason.

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and such action is requested.

Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: November 21, 2006

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